

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~An intervertebral implant (1), specifically an artificial intervertebral disk, ~~with~~comprising a central axis (2) and

A) an upper plate-shaped section (10), suitable for laying onto the base plate of a vertebral body lying above, wherein the upper section (10) is provided with one ventral side area (11), one dorsal side area (12), two lateral side areas (13;14), an upper apposition surface (15) and a lower surface (16);

B) and a lower plate-shaped section (30) suitable for laying onto the cover plate of a vertebral body lying below, wherein the upper section (20) is provided with one ventral side area (31), one dorsal side area (32), two lateral side areas (33;34), an upper apposition surface (35) and a lower surface (36), ~~characterised in that~~wherein

C) between the upper and lower section (10;30), a central, plate-shaped section (20) is arranged, wherein the central section (20) is provided with a ventral side surface (21), a dorsal side surface (22), two lateral side surfaces (23;24), a lower surface (25) facing the lower section (30) and an upper surface (26) facing the upper section (10);

D) between the upper section (10) and the central section (20), a first circular-

cylindrical rod (40) with a longitudinal axis (41) is arranged; and

E) between the lower section (30) and the central section (20), a second circular-cylindrical rod (50) with a longitudinal axis (51) is arranged.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the lower surface (16) of the first section (10) and the upper surface (26) of the central section (20) are formed as sliding surfaces for the first, circular-cylindrical rod (40) that come in contact with them.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 2, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the two sliding surfaces (16;26) for the first circular-cylindrical rod (40) are formed as flat, circular-cylindrical or conical planes.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~Claim 1 to 3, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the lower surface (25) of the central plate-shaped section (20) and the upper surface (36) of the lower plate-shaped section (30) are formed as sliding surfaces for the second, circular-cylindrical rod (50) that come in contact with them.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the two sliding surfaces (25;36) for the second, circular-cylindrical rod (50) are formed as flat, circular-cylindrical or conical planes.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to

~~one of the Claims~~ Claim 2 to 5, characterised in that wherein one or more of the sliding surfaces (16;26;25;36) is provided at least partially with a peripheral perimeter (70).

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~ The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~ Claim 2 to 6, characterised in that wherein a number of limits/stops (80) are provided on one or more of the sliding surfaces (16;26;25;36) for the rotation of the cylindrical rods (40;50) around the central axle (2).

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~ The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~ Claim 2 to 6, characterised in that wherein a pair of grooves (17;27;28;37) is provided as a bearing for the first and/or second rod (40;50) on one or both of the sliding surface pairs (16;26; 25;36) formed by the four sliding surfaces (16;26;25;36).

9. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~ The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 8, characterised in that wherein the pair of grooves (17;27;28;37) is congruent to the circular-cylindrical rods (40,50) carried therein.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~ The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 8 or 9, characterised in that wherein at least one pair of grooves (17;27;28;37) is designed incongruent to the circular-cylindrical rods (40,50) it has to bear and is preferably provided with a width that allows a limited rotation of the rods (40;50) around the central axle (2) in the grooves (17;27;28;37).

11. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims Claim 8 to 10, characterised in that~~wherein at least one section of the grooves (17;27;28;37) is provided with a limit/stop (75) attached on the periphery to prevent axial shifting of the rod (40;50) carried therein.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims Claim 8 to 11, characterised in that~~wherein the one pair of grooves (17;27) for the first rod (40) runs from the ventral to the dorsal side surfaces (11;21;31;12;22;32) of the corresponding plate-shaped sections (10;20;30) and the second pair of grooves (28;37) for the second rod (50) runs between the lateral side surfaces (13;14;23;24;33;34) of the corresponding plate-shaped sections (10;20;30).

13. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 7, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the limits/stops (80) are arranged so that the longitudinal axis (41) of the first rod (40) ~~intersect~~intersects the ventral and dorsal side surfaces (11;21;31;12;22;32) of the corresponding plate-shaped sections (10;20;30), and that the longitudinal axis (51) of the second rod (50) ~~intersect~~intersects the lateral side surfaces (13;14;23;24;33;34) of the corresponding plate-shaped sections (10;20;30).

14. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims Claim 1 to 13, characterised in that~~wherein an elastically malleable means (60) is provided that holds the upper and lower plate-shaped sections (10;30)

together with the intermediate lying central plate-shaped section (20) and the two rods (40;50).

15. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 14, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the elastically malleable means (60) is provided as springs (61) or elastomer connection elements.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~Claim 2 to 15, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the four sliding surfaces (16;25;26;36) and the two rods (40,50) are made of metal.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~Claim 2 to 15, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the four sliding surfaces (16;25;26;36) are made of metal and the two rods (40,50) are made of ceramic.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to ~~one of the Claims~~Claim 1 to 17, ~~characterised in that~~wherein means (90) are provided that are suitable to create temporary blocking of the mobility of the three plate-shaped sections (10;20;30) relative to each other.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 18, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the means (90) on the two ventral side surfaces (11;21;31) can be attached to the three plate-shaped sections (10;20;30).

20. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 18 ~~or Claim 19, characterised in that~~wherein the means (90) comprise an insert (91) with a lower end (95) and an upper end (96) and a depression (92;93) in the surfaces (16;36) on each of the two external plate-shaped sections (10;30), which are open on the ventral side surfaces (11;31) of the two external plate-shaped sections (10;30), and that the insert (91) can be inserted with its ends (95;96) into each of the two depressions (92;93).

21. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the depressions (42;43) are dovetail guides and the ends (45;46) on the insert (41) are arranged complementary to these dovetail guides.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~Intervertebral~~The intervertebral implant (1) according to Claim 21, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the dovetail guides are tapered from the ventral side surfaces (11;31) of the two external plate-shaped ~~section~~sections (10;30) towards the dorsal side surfaces (12;32) of the two external plate-shaped sections (10;30).

23. (Currently Amended) ~~Process~~A process for the replacement of a ~~defect~~defective, natural intervertebral disk characterised by an intervertebral implant (1), ~~with~~comprising the steps:

A) blocking of the joint(s) (38;39) of an intervertebral implant (1) through the special

means (90) in a certain position of the joint(s) (38;39);

B) insertion of the intervertebral implant (1) into the intervertebral space to be treated;

C) release and removal of the device (90) inserted into the intervertebral implant (1) for blocking the joint(s) (38;39).

24. (Currently Amended) ~~Process~~The process according to Claim 23, characterised ~~in that it additionally comprises~~comprising the step of the subsequent blocking of the joint(s) (38;39) on the implanted intervertebral implant (1) through the means (90).